

MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA CHAPTER

MINUTES - BOARD OF DIRECTORS ZOOM MEETING

18 February 2021

Call to Order

President Lee Ensley called the Zoom meeting of the Board of Directors of The Southwest Virginia Chapter, Military Officers Association to order at 1001 hours Eastern Standard Time on 18 February 2021.

Directors and Chapter Officers Present

President Lee Ensley, 1st Vice President Matthew Haag, 2nd Vice President and Membership Chair Robert Brown, Secretary Steve Jamison, Treasurer Scott Van Cleef, Sergeant At Arms Michael Kasnick, Legislative Affairs Representative and Awards Chair Robert Habermann, Chaplain and Past President David Gilleran, VCOC Representative and Personal Affairs Officer Jim Flynn, Community Services Volunteer Representative Dan Karnes, Smith Mountain Lake Satellite Representative Rick Cocrane, Surviving Spouse Representative Mary Lou Summers, Director Roger Burnett, Director John Miller, Director Tom Dalzell.

Directors and Chapter Officers Absent

Director Michael Leigh, Director Larry Johnson.

Opening Prayer

Chaplain Gilleran led the Board of Directors in prayer.

Pledge of Allegiance

1st Vice President Matthew Haag led The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag recited by all present online.

Approval of Board of Directors Meetings Minutes

Minutes of the Board of Directors meeting of 17 December 2020 were approved as submitted.

Presidents Report –

- MOAA 2021 Community Outreach Grant submitted on 10 February 2021. The grant request is for \$5,000 in support of the Military Family Support Center.
- The Military Family Support Center is still providing critical support to our military families. In lieu of food pantry days, outdoor drive-by provides food

support. MFSC requires around \$2,500/month to sustain operations. Next food drive-by scheduled for 25 February.

Secretary's Report -

- Secretary Jamison reported the chapter membership stood at 122 as of 18 February. There are 111 regular members and 11 surviving spouses on the rolls.
- Only 64 members have paid their 2021 membership dues. An email will be set to those members who have not paid 2021 dues to remind them that dues are due.
- The premium for the 2021 SWVC Chapter Voluntary Club/Chapter Insurance policy, Commercial, General Liability Certificate RL-6599030701 has been paid.

Treasurers Report

- Prime checking account balance - \$8,356.14
- The Profit and Loss statement, Budget vs. Actual, 1 January through 18 February 2021 and reconciliation detail were provided to each board member by email.
- Leadership and savings fund balance - \$7,434.49, of which \$4,050 is in savings, \$3,380 from the VFW gift and \$4.49 in the Leadership Awards fund. (Does not include \$650 in donations from chapter members which are in the checking account).
- The annual internal audit will again this year be conducted by Col Bro Brown.

1st Vice Presidents Report

- No report. Matt Haag' was complimented again for the excellent work in setting up the Zoom meeting protocols. Well done.
- Will continue month to month Zoom subscription vice annual subscription.

Membership Chair Report

- Bob Brown indicated he sent out 30 "second contact" letters.

Program Directors Report

- Meeting programs scheduled for 2020-2021
 - 18 February 2021 – Board of Directors Zoom meeting. Zoom program by chapter member Joe Obenshain on his recent trip to Southeast Asia and Vietnam titled "Tour of the 'Hanoi Hilton' in the company of POW Porter Halyburton."
 - 18 March 2021 – Zoom program (tentative) "Team Rubicon" and the book "Once A Warrior" by Marine sniper Jake Wood.
 - 15 April 2021 – Board of Directors Zoom meeting. Zoom program (new) by CDR Youssef Aboul-Enein, titled "*Countering Terrorism Threats in the Context of Great Power Competition: Russia, China, Iran, and Managing Terrorism.*"
 - 20 May 2021 – Board of Directors Zoom meeting. Zoom program by Ned LeGard about his experience as a nuclear weapons officer aboard an aircraft carrier in the Mideast during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Surviving Spouse Representative Report

- The 8th Annual Christmas Wreath Laying at the Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery Dublin, Virginia was conducted by volunteers on 19 December. 1,349 wreaths were placed. Mary Lou expressed profound thanks for those chapter members who financially supported the purchase of the wreaths for this year. Wreaths cost \$9.00 each and all costs were covered.
- Mary Lou has 6 active ladies she is in contact with. Some ladies are DAR members who volunteer at the Veterans Care Center.

Public Relations Report

- Communiqué Newsletter – 4th quarter 2020 (OCT-NOV-DEC) published in December 2020.
- Communiqué Newsletter – 1st quarter 2021 (JAN-FEB-MAR) scheduled for publication in March 2021.
- 2021 Chapter Communications Awards application for Print/E-Newsletter and Website submitted 22 January 2021.
- 2020 Chapter Levels of Excellence Award – Awaiting application guidance from MOAA. Due April 2021.
- Chapter Website & Face book – Up and running. Some changes to the website including on “Home”, “About the Chapter”, and the Contact page. Public Affairs/Media – Need a volunteer to fill this position.

Past Presidents Report

- The Roanoke Valley Veterans Council Veterans met several times by ZOOM. No activities to report. Considering a Memorial Day ceremony at Lee Plaza on Memorial Day 2021.

Directors Report's

- John Miller reported that Roanoke Hospitality House, Veterans Assistance Fund received donations of \$1,940 including the Chapter's \$100 per year donation.

Legislative Liaison Report

- Here are MOAA's priorities for advocacy as the 117th Congress begins its work. Our focus remains on all eight of the uniformed services and their service-earned entitlements. As protecting health care and service-earned benefits continues to be a challenge, MOAA will press forward in engaging Congress to shape outcomes in these vital areas. There are steep hills before us. Our nation has a rising debt of more than \$27 trillion, and a deficit of more than \$3 trillion. In view of this, MOAA anticipates robust attempts to control federal budgets, reduce or eliminate unprogrammed expenditures, and reduce entitlements. MOAA needs you to be at the ready to reach out to your legislators, and keep that engagement going as needed to make sure your voice is heard. Our priorities may be updated, as warranted, during the next two years this Congress is in session. Go to [MOAA.org](https://www.moaa.org), [MOAA's 2021 Legislative Priorities](#). **Click on the links below.**

- Recognize the COVID-19 Pandemic Changed the Landscape for Many of Our Priorities
- Protect the Value of the Military Health Care Benefit
- Protect the MHS Pharmacy Benefit and Achieve Flexibility in TRICARE Pharmacy Co pays
- Address Barriers to Accessing Care Within the MHS, Including TRICARE Coverage Gaps and Mental Health Care Access Challenges
- Achieve Concurrent Receipt of Service-Earned Retirement Pay and VA Disability Pay
- Protect Family Support Programs, and Ensure Military-Provided Services (Housing, PCS, Child Care) Are Affordable, Readily Available, and Meet Quality Standards
- Reform the Presumptive Process to Support Veterans Claiming Service-Connected Disabilities for Toxic Exposures
- Achieve Equity of Benefits, Protections and Administrative Support for Guard/Reserve Members Consistent With Their Active Duty Counterparts
- Sustain Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Foundational Missions and Services
- Protect Arlington National Cemetery as an Option for Those Currently Eligible to Receive Full Military Honors, Through Expansion of Our National Cemetery
- Sustain Pay Raises for Service members and COLA Raises for Retirees
- Improve Survivor Benefits
- Ensure the Coast Guard Receives Pay During a Government Shutdown

VCOC Report

- **JLC 2021 Initiatives:** During the October 21, 2020 meeting, the JLC adopted seven initiatives for 2021 for consideration by DVS, the Governor, and General Assembly. An eighth initiative was approved at the November 20, 2020 meeting. In addition, the JLC approved two letters requesting support. A summary of the 2021 JLC Initiatives Policy papers for each initiative can be accessed on the JLC webpage at: https://www.dvs.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/JLC-2021-Initiatives_SUMMARY-as-of-Nov-20-2020.pdf

Smith Mountain Lake Satellite Report

- Rick Cocrane reported that there are no scheduled dates or plans to reconvene the Smith Mountain Satellite meetings until COVID-19 is under control

Committee Chairperson's Report

- **Awards Chair:**
 - 2020 Chapter Leadership Awards presentations. Successfully completed.
 - 2021 Chapter Leadership Awards. Nomination packages due 29 March 2021.
 - 2021 MOAA ROTC and JROTC Medal Awards. Letters sent out to CAP units.

Old Business

- No report.

New Business

- John Miller reported that the funds donated for the Roanoke Hospitality House are still there for use when needed.

Chapter Membership ZOOM Program

Call to Order

President Lee Ensley called the Chapter Zoom Membership meeting to order at 1200 Hours.

Opening Prayer

Chaplain Gilleran led the chapter members in prayer.

Pledge of Allegiance

1st Vice President Matthew Haag led The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag recited by all members and guests present.

Introduction of Guests and the featured speaker Captain Jim Carman, USN (Ret)

- Chapter President Lee Ensley recognized several new members and guests and introduced the guest speaker chapter member Joe Obenshain who presented a program titled "Tour of the 'Hanoi Hilton' in the company of POW Porter Halyburton. The tour was arranged through Davidson College where both Joe Obenshain and Porter Halyburton attended college.
- Porter Halyburton was a Navy pilot shot down over North Vietnam and was held in the Hoan Lo Prison (the infamous Hanoi Hilton) as a POW. He was shot down on 17 October 1965 and was held until his release on 12 February 1973.
- Pictures were shared of the entrance to the prison, relief panels depicting the torture of political prisoners, a monument commemorating the anti-aircraft battery that shot down John McCain's aircraft, pictures of the prison cells plus maps and drawings of the prison complex. POW's were designated "Special Guests".
- Pictures were shown of the POW release and credit given to the POW wives who were instrumental in detailing the condition of the POW's and putting pressure on the government to secure the release of the POW's.

Next Chapter Zoom Meeting

- 1200 Hours Thursday 18 March 2021.